

DATE: January 31, 2002

TO: Chief Examiners, Alternate Examiners & All Testing Center Staff

FROM: Mark Fetler, State GED Administrator
State GED Office; CA Department of Education
800-331-6316

SUBJECT: 2001 FALL UPDATE

Chief Examiners: Please share this information with addendum sites!

Submission of 2001 Scores

It's that time again—time to start submitting all test scores from 2001 to the State GED Office. Please make sure that all passing, failing, partial and re-test scores are recorded on the GED-001 form and submitted to the State GED Office no later than January 18, 2002. No formal statistical report is required from testing centers, but it is essential that all individual testing data be submitted by this due date so that State GED Office Staff can enter data into the computer system, compile state statistics, and submit these figures to the GED Testing Service by early February.

We realize that the job will be more time-consuming than usual this year because large numbers of examinees are trying to finish up testing before the January 1 cutoff date. However, please make every effort to get those scores in *quickly*. The larger numbers also impact staff at the state level who must process the scores.

As an incentive, consider this—*this is the last time you will have to submit scores to the State GED Office*. In the future, the scoring contractor will forward statistical information to the GED Testing Service directly, eliminating much of the effort involved in this “end-of-year” process and enabling GEDTS to receive their statistical data in a more timely manner.

No GED Testing Between December 31, 2001 and January 14, 2002

The State GED Office recently received a directive from the GED Testing Service that administration of the 2002 Series English-language GED Tests and the current series of Spanish-language GED tests may not begin prior to Monday, January 14, 2002. GEDTS's decision to delay the administration start date will:

- ?? Provide the necessary window to ensure materials arrive in a timely manner, given the heightened security concerns with shipping.

?? Provide Examiners with the opportunity to become familiar with the new materials and shipping procedures.

There are a number of new products to become familiar with, including the two Mathematics Test booklets, the calculator, the alternate format and calculator video, and separate answer sheets. In addition, Examiners will receive three posters (28" x 40") that explain how to record an answer on the coordinate plane grid, how to use the calculator, and how to fill out other alternate format answers. The poster is included because many Examiners do not plan to use the alternate format video as part of test administration. In 2003, the coordinate plane grid directions will also be included in the Mathematics Test booklet.

The Shipping News

Testing materials for California centers which did NOT order the large-print version of the test will be mailed at the end of November. Testing materials for California centers which DID order the large-print version of the test will be shipped during the week of December 10-14.

Each Chief Examiner will receive a postcard from Charles Bedore, Director of GEDTS Operations. The post card will be mailed the same day materials are shipped and will inform Chief Examiners that the shipment is on the way.

Change in Reporting of Test Scores for California

Beginning in 2002, California will begin reporting scores based on the new reporting format required by the GED Testing Service.

For testing that begins in January of 2002, scores on the GED test will be reported using three digits instead of two. In most cases, this will involve adding a "zero" to the end of the standard score as it would be reported today. In other words, a score that would be reported as a "45" in the year 2001 will be reported as "450" in 2002.

Change in the Passing Standard for the 2002 Series GED Tests

In 2002, California will require passing scores on the GED test that reflect the national standards established by the GED Testing Service. Beginning in January, passing scores on the GED test will be:

1. A standard score of 410 or higher on *each* of the five subtests, AND
2. an average of 450 or higher on the five tests in the battery.

As usual, there will be no "rounding up" of the 450 average requirement.

2002 Processing of GED Test Scores

State GED staff have been bombarded with questions on the new procedures for processing scores, filling out the new demographic sheets, fees, etc. Some of the most frequently asked questions and answers follow:

Deadlines

1. Can we do any testing with the current version of the English-language GED test after December 31, 2001?

?? No. All testing centers should receive next year's English-language tests before the end of this calendar year. Any English scores submitted to the State GED Office using the currently available forms (AQ, AP, AO or AS, or any form used as a replacement because of a test embargo) will be considered invalid if the test date is after December 31, 2001.

2. Can we do any testing with the current forms of the Spanish-language test after December 31, 2001?

?? No. All testing centers should receive next year's Spanish-language test forms before the end of this calendar year. Any Spanish scores submitted to the State GED Office using the currently available forms (AX, AY or AZ) will be considered invalid if the test date is after December 31, 2001.

4. What answer sheets need to be used?

?? For English: After January 14, 2002, you must use the new four-part answer sheet that you ordered with your new testing materials.

?? For Spanish: After January 14, 2002, you must use the currently-available eight-page answer sheet that is ordered using the GEDTS order form; *the small NCS bubble-sheets may NOT be used*. Spanish answers may be recorded on either the English- or Spanish-language version of the pre-2002 GEDTS answer sheet, so long as the answer sheet is machine scorable (if you have GEDTS answer sheets from previous years on file you may use them. They'll be either green or blue). A supplemental order form from GEDTS is attached if you need to order answer sheets for the Spanish test.

?? In 2003, you will need to use either the English four-part answer sheet or Spanish-language version of the four-part answer sheet for persons testing in Spanish. The Spanish-language four-part answer sheet will be available next year when you order materials for 2003.

Questions regarding the Demographic Sheet

5. Can the demographic sheet be filled out before the testing session?
?? Yes. In fact, the length of the demographic portion of the answer sheet almost demands that it be completed during the pre-registration process. The State GED Office strongly encourages pre-registration; pre-registration enables the examiner to determine what tests examinees need to take and to better plan for the testing session. “Walk-ins” should be discouraged.
6. Can teachers have access to the demographic sheet?
?? Yes. The demographic sheet is not secure material.
7. What if the student refuses to fill out the complete demographic sheet?
?? The test will still be scored—however, staff should not consider any field to be “optional.” We realize that the demographic sheet is much longer than it was previously and that some of the information requested is of a sensitive nature. If an examinee feels uncomfortable providing some of the requested information, he or she is not, of course, forced to provide it.
?? Please note, however, that this information is being requested by GEDTS for research purposes so that it will be possible to quantify the value of the GED testing program. The State GED Office will follow up with any testing center that habitually submits incomplete demographic sheets to the Educational Testing Service.
8. What should the examinee put in #5 (county/district/parish)?
?? Nothing. Leave it blank.
9. What should the examinee put in #8 if he or she doesn’t have a Social Security Number or doesn’t want to give one?
?? Nothing. Leave #8 blank if the Social Security Number is not provided. Do NOT bubble in any of the other options (i.e., Social Insurance Number, Jurisdiction, Program Specific, or Tax Identification Number) under any circumstances. Do NOT enter a placeholder number that is not the actual Social Security Number.
10. What should the examinee put in #14 if they only speak English and have taken classes only in English?
?? Nothing. Leave it blank. This question is primarily for those examinees testing in Spanish or French who may have received instruction in a language other than their primary language. Note that on question #13 that English-speakers are directed to skip to question #15.
11. What should be put in #17 if the examinee is attending homeschool?
?? Put the last year he or she attended a traditional K-12 school.

12. What should be put in #21 if the examinee doesn't want to divulge his or her income?
?? Nothing. Leave it blank (make sure the examinee doesn't enter a "0" if, in fact some income was earned but he or she doesn't want to divulge this income)

13. What if none of the conditions in #22 apply to the examinee?
?? Leave it blank.

On #25, what should be entered if someone besides the examinee paid a fee for preparation?

?? The purpose of this question is to find out whether or not a fee was required for preparation. If any person had to pay a fee for preparation, bubble in "yes." If preparation was provided through an agency such as a public school, correctional facility, Job Corps, etc., bubble in "no."

14. What if the examinee bubbles in "no" where, at the end of the form, it asks if the information contained on the form is accurate?

?? Ask the examinee why "no" is bubbled in. If an examinee bubbled in "no" because he or she is not completely sure about the answers to questions #29 and #30 (and many people may not remember accurately this information about high school coursework), they should go ahead and bubble in "yes." If they are saying "no" for some other reason, contact the State GED Office.

15. On the last page of the demographic sheet, in the shaded blue area, what is the testing center code (question #1)?

?? Your testing center code (or testing center identification number) appears on your contract. It will always start with "300007" and end with a number specific to your center, such as "3000071738"

16. On the last page of the demographic sheet, in the shaded blue area, what is the Instructional Center Code (question #2)?

?? Leave this blank.

17. On the last page of the demographic sheet, in the shaded blue area, what is the Code of the last K-12 school attended (question #3)?

?? GEDTS will send each testing center a book of these codes for schools in the State of California. The State GED Office will receive a book of these codes for schools nationwide. If the number can't be located, leave it blank.

18. Who signs the "Privacy Act Statement" at the end of the demographic sheet?

?? Only individuals who answered "yes" to question #10 (persons who are on active military duty) should sign this statement.

Access to the ETS Website for GED Data

19. Can we access our testing data at our home computers?

?? No.

20. Can we access the data with computers at addendum sites?

?? No.

21. Can more than one person/machine per office have access to the internet connection?
Some offices have multiple staff persons who need access to records.

?? Yes.

Fee/Cost Information

22. How much are we going to be charged for scoring?

?? Centers will be charged \$6 to score a complete test battery. A complete test battery includes scanning all five subtests and reading the essay. This fee will be charged the first time examinee data is submitted—whether the complete battery or part of the battery is submitted.

?? If the Language Arts-Writing must be retaken, the center will be charged an additional \$3 for reading & scoring the essay portion.

?? If any of the remaining four tests must be retaken, they will be scanned and scored without charge.

?? If the results of any test are challenged, and the center requests that the test be re-scored, the center will be charged an additional \$3 for the second scoring.

23. Is the initial set of score reports sent from ETS to the testing center without extra charge?

?? Yes. Additional score reports will cost \$1 each.

24. Is the GEDTS national fee going to be increased?

?? Yes. The GEDTS fee will be increased from \$6 to \$7.50 in 2002 and will increase again to \$8 in 2003.

25. Is the state fee going to be increased?

?? No. The state fee of \$12 will remain the same.

ETS Questions

26. How should answer sheets be mailed to ETS?

?? We recommend that answer sheets be mailed registered or certified mail—use a carrier that has a system of tracking mail to minimize the chances of losing a batch of answer sheets.

27. Can we use other mail carriers to ship answer sheets to ETS?
?? Yes – shipping answer sheets to ETS is done at the expense of the center so any reliable method—such as FedEx—is acceptable.
28. May testing center staff remove the extra piece of scratch paper in the Language Arts—Writing booklet? This extra sheet might be used by the examinee instead of the correct sheet.
?? Yes.
29. Will both English and Spanish answer sheets need to be sent to Educational Testing Service for scoring in 2002?
?? Yes.
30. Will both Spanish and English test scores be on the Website?
?? Yes.
31. Should testing centers include the Spanish answer sheets with the English answer sheets when mailing to ETS?
?? Spanish and English answer sheets may be mailed in the same envelope, but be sure to batch them separately and mark them clearly.
32. How will testing center staff access the ETS website?
?? The State GED office, using the ETS Web interface, will assign user i.d.'s and passwords to each center's Chief Examiner and possibly to Alternate Chief Examiners. The password(s) will change annually and every time a Chief Examiner is replaced.
33. Will centers have to provide existing Spanish scores to ETS?
?? No, Sacramento will provide ETS with this information.
34. Should the centers send individual subtests or the entire completed test to ETS?
?? Submit answer sheets as individual subtests are completed. The demographic sheet must be sent with the initial shipment of each examinee's scores.
35. Does a candidate always have to submit the Language Arts—Writing multiple choice test with the essay?
?? Yes. Only Writing tests that include both the essay and multiple choice answers will be scored.
36. What about French GED tests?
?? Those will be handled on a case-by-case basis through the State GED office.
37. May testing centers submit the "Science/Social Studies/Reading" multiple choice booklet if answers are recorded for only one test?
?? Yes.

38. How many times may a candidate take the test?

?? In 2002, there will be three English forms available; examinees may attempt the test three times.

39. If an examinee does not provide a social security number, how can I find out the ID number for that examinee if he/she comes back for another part of the test before I get the scores back in the mail?

?? ETS will scan correctly submitted Demographic forms within one business day of receiving them. You can look online for the information you need or call ETS or the State GED Office if you do not have internet access. A correctly submitted form means all necessary bubbles are completely and accurately bubbled.

Miscellaneous

40. Can the math instructions on the posters be copied and distributed to math teachers?

?? Yes. The instructions are not secure materials. Remember, though, that no part of the actual test booklet may be copied.

41. Is the order of the subtests going to be the same?

?? The tests will no longer be numbered, but simply labeled by the subject area. They will be packed in the following order: Language Arts Writing, Language Arts Reading, Math Part #1,-- Math Part #2, Science, and Social Studies.

42. Will the State GED Office still issue the High School Equivalency Certificate and the Official Report of Test Results?

?? Yes.

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